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HERESIES 21

FOOD IS A FEMINIST ISSUE

a feminist publication on art & politics

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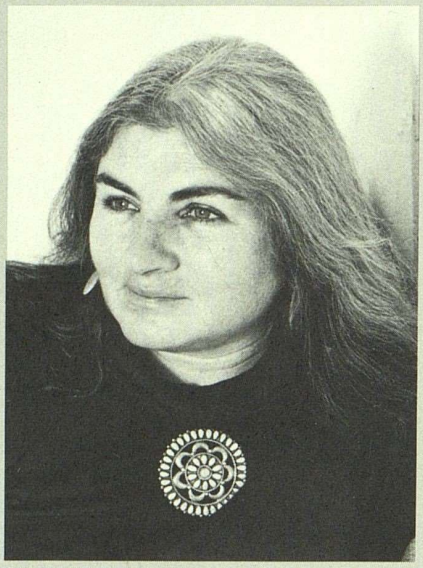

COLLEEN MC KAY

MARGARET RANDALL ORDERED DEPORTED

Margaret Randall is a poet who has contributed frequently to Heresies *and to leading literary and political journals. Unaware of the consequences she would suffer later, she gave up her American citizenship in the 1960s and applied for Mexican citizenship so she could live and work in Mexico while raising her children. She spent fifteen years there and lived in Cuba and Nicaragua as well before returning to the U.S. Throughout her writing career she has expressed views on racism, sexism, and foreign policy that the Reagan administration finds inimical to its policies. A few years ago she came back to the United States to be with her family and to teach at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, at which time she tried to reassume her US citizenship. On August 28, 1986, Immigration Judge Martin Spiegel ruled that Margaret Randall would not be permitted to remain in the U.S. because, in his judgment, her writings "advocate the economic, international, and government doctrines of world communism." This charge is a statutory basis for exclusion under the McCarran-Walter Act, passed in 1952 at the height of the McCarthy era. Judge Spiegel gave Randall until December 1, 1986 to leave the country. In February 1987, an appeal of his decision was made to the Board of Immigration, and her case is also being brought before a Federal District Court. Joining her as plaintiffs in the federal case are the PEN American Center and several prominent writers, including Kurt Vonnegut and Alice Walker. Margaret Randall is permitted to remain in this country pending the appeal decision, expected some time in April. Funds are urgently needed to fight this case. Donations should be made to the Margaret Randall Defense Committee, 123 Yale SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, or to the Center for Constitutional Rights, 666 Broadway, 7th floor, New York, NY 10012.*

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We are also very grateful to the excellent organizers and producers of our inspiring benefit performance night on December 12, 1986: Jerri Allyn (who ran the show), Marty Pottenger (who helped her run the show), and Lori Seid (who made sure all the machines picked up their cues).

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HERESIES

A FEMINIST PUBLICATION ON ART AND POLITICS

Heresies *is an idea-oriented journal devoted to the examination of art and politics from a feminist perspective. We believe that what is commonly called art can have a political impact and that in the making of art and all cultural artifacts our identities as women play a distinct role. We hope that* **Heresies** *will stimulate dialogue around radical political and aesthetic theory, as well as generate new creative energies among women. It will be a place where diversity can be articulated. We are committed to broadening the definition and function of art.*

Heresies *is published by a collective of feminists, some of whom are also socialists, marxists, lesbian feminists, or anarchists; our fields include painting, sculpture, writing, anthropology, literature, performance, art history, architecture, filmmaking, photography, and video. While the themes of the individual issues will be determined by the collective, each issue will have a different editorial staff, composed of members of the mother collective and other women interested in that theme.* **Heresies** *provides experience for women who work editorially, in design, and in production. An open evaluation meeting will be held after the appearance of each issue.* **Heresies** *will try to be accountable to and in touch with the international feminist community.*

As women, we are aware that historically the connections between our lives, our arts, and our ideas have been suppressed. Once these connections are clarified, they can function as a means to dissolve the alienation between artist and audience, and to understand the relationship between art and politics, work and workers. As a step toward the demystification of art, we reject the standard relationship of criticism to art within the present system, which has often become the relationship of advertiser to product. We will not advertise a new set of genius-products just because they are made by women. We are not committed to any particular style or aesthetic, nor to the competitive mentality that pervades the art world. Our view of feminism is one of process and change, and we feel that in the process of this dialogue we can foster a change in the meaning of art.

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HERE SHE COMES, MYTH CALIFORNIA

by Nikki Craft

QUESTION THE TYRANNY OF SLENDERNESS

The beauty ideal uses and exploits the female body for men's profit and entertainment. Our culture's standard of beauty is a myth and a lie and encourages weight slavery. It perpetuates the not-so-pretty side of the obsession with slenderness: binging, vomiting, starvation; amphetamine, diuretic, and laxative addiction.

Ann Simonton in Bologna Dress

The Myth California Pageant is drawing attention to the unreal and artificial sexist images of women. The sweet, white all-American tradition, as represented in the Miss California Pageant, is not an accurate reflection of our true diversity. The Miss California contest reinforces the objectification of women, making the rapist mentality in our culture possible and permissible. It is our belief that this beauty pageant blatently perpetuates the myth of women as passive sexual objects.

The Miss California Pageant family continues to deny that this is actually a beauty contest. They claim instead that it is a scholarship foundation. If it is, where are the women over 25 years old? Where are the women of color? The physically disabled women? Women who do not have ideal measurements, the Clairol hair, or Maybelline eyes? Are these women not worthy of a "scholarship?"

Nikki Craft is a political activist using nudity, art and civil disobedience to confront issues of women's rights. Currently living in Oshkosh, WI, she travels the country urging women to break laws that discriminate against them. Arrested 43 times, she remains incorrigible and unrehabilitated.

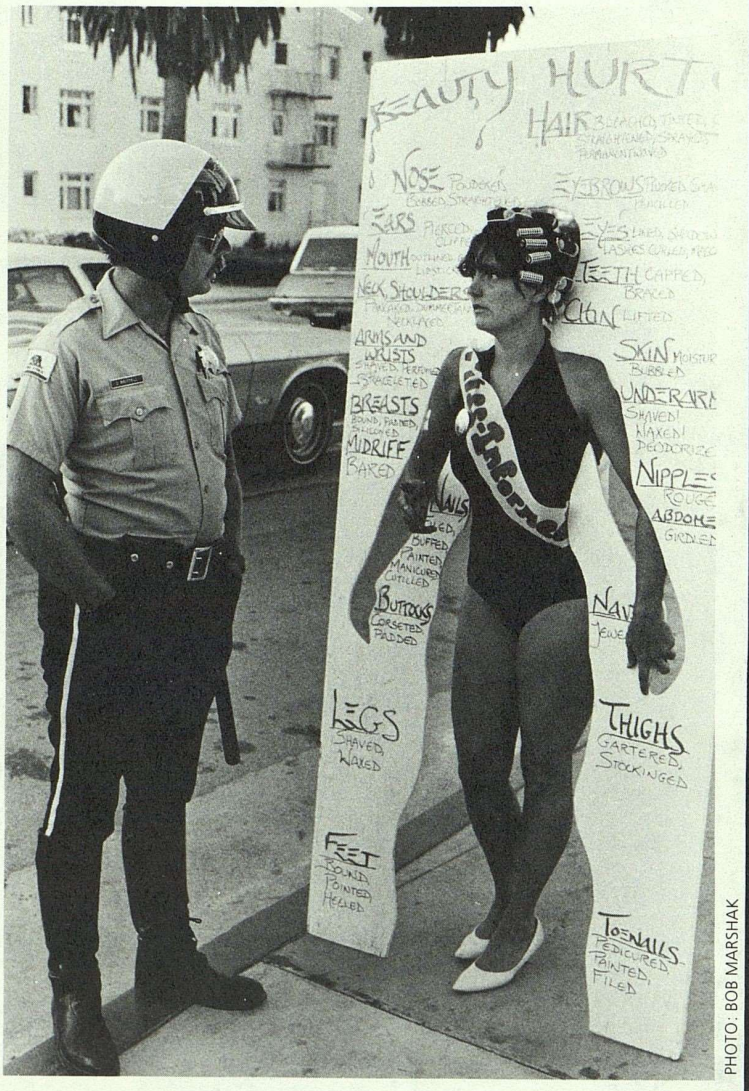

PHOTO: BOB MARSHAK

Nikki Craft with Policeman

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At the weight slavery protest we had women, wearing spiked high heels, jumping through hula hoops labeled Beauty Obedience School as they dragged bathroom scales on chains from their ankles.

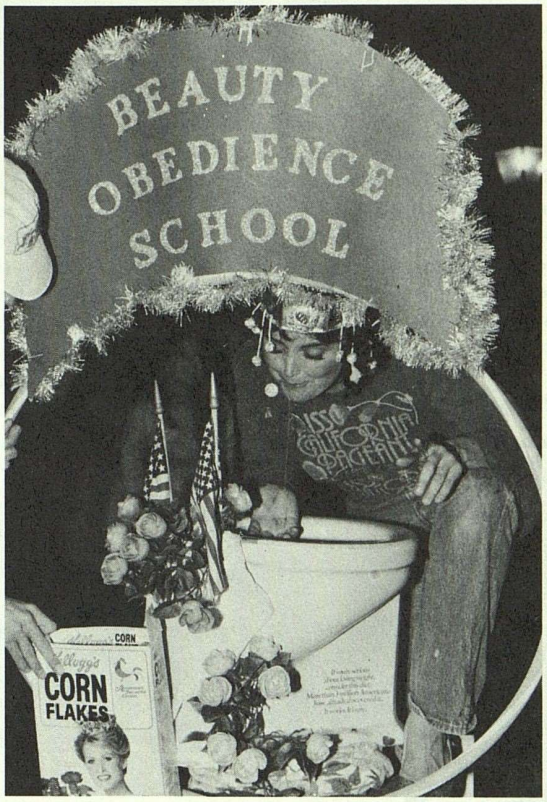

PHOTO: DON FUKUDA

1000 protesters disrupt Miss California pageant

By MATT SPEISER

As a 300-pound woman dressed in a shocking pink bikini cheered on a crowd of protesters outside, a 24-year-old blonde from West Los Angeles was named Miss California Monday night before a sequined audience at the Santa Cruz Civic auditorium.

In addition to the naming of Donna Grace Cherry as the state's entrant to the Miss America pageant, Deirdre Hamilton, Miss Tulare, was declared the first runner-up. They will receive $6,000 and $2,500 scholarships, respectively.

The crowning of Miss California, however, was partially upstaged Monday by the activities of feminist protesters outside, who held their annual Myth California demonstration on adjacent Church Street. As the tuxedoed and gowned participants arrived for the pageant, nearly 1,000 protesters lined the street, chanting "No more profits off of women's bodies."

While the festivities inside the auditorium were televised throughout the state, none of the activities of the protesters made the airwaves. Even when three demonstrators jumped on the Civic's stage near the conclusion of the event, the television cameras turned the other way and the show was quickly concluded.

Three men, dressed in the acceptable attire of the evening, jumped on the stage just as Miss Cherry was being crowned and yelled, "Men Resist Sexism." After participants on stage realized what was happening, the trio was escorted off stage. The television producers were quicker on the draw, immediately pulling their cameras back when the commotion began. The names of the three men have been referred to the district attorney's office for possible prosecution.

One arrest came from the evening's events. A woman who tried to enter the contest without a ticket was arrested for trespassing.

The annual feminist protests have been growing in size and intensity since their inception four years ago. In 1982, the protest featured a woman dressed in 35 pounds of cold cuts, sashed "Miss Steak," who said, "judge meat, not women." In 1983, women shackled by bathroom scales leaped through hula hoops labeled Beauty Obedience School.

This year the centerpiece of a three-vehicle parade was the striking profile of 32-year-old Susan Dubin, who sat atop a convertible wearing a size 54 pink bikini. She is founder of the Santa Cruz-Monterey Bay chapter of the National Association to Aid Fat Americans.

"Americans have this cultural obsession with weight," Ms. Dubin said. "We're saying intelligent and creative people come in all sizes and shapes. That's the point of my bikini —to show people that I radiate self-assurance and self-respect."

The demonstration also featured the Berkeley group Ladies Against Women, a four-member satirical tribe dressed in excessively traditional garb. They sarcastically call for a return to "American values."

"If God hadn't wanted women to look like Barbie dolls, he wouldn't have given us padded bras and cosmetic surgery," said one.

At times the camp dress of the demonstrators was so close to the fashions they were mimicking, it was difficult to tell the protesters and pageant participants apart.

The participants, however, were the ones with the long faces. Most of those arriving for the pageant seemed stunned and disgusted by the protesters.

One booster of Miss Tulare described the protesters as "slums of the earth."

Ervin Schapansky said, "This pageant is 63 years old. If there were something wrong with it, it wouldn't be here."

PHOTO: KURT ELLISON

Susan Dubin

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